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County Irritant: Letters to the Editor

Great Neck—A member of the public in criticizing a newspaper for an editorial endorsement must take particular care, I believe, not to criticize the motives that enter into such a decision.

However, where such a decision is based upon a fallacy in reasoning, I feel it imperative that this be brought to the newspaper's attention.

Such is the case with your editorial endorsement of Sen. Keating, wherein you not only endorse the incumbent senator for reelection, but actually praise his disgraceful conduct during perilous days of American history.

Unfortunately, the one person who is unable for obvious reasons to level suitable criticism at the senator's actions during the Cuban crisis is now the Democratic candidate for senator. For this reason and this reason alone, the choice is unfortunate.

In September and October of 1962, certain information apparently came to Sen. Keating. The senator must have known that there were only two possibilities at that time. Either the information was known to the Central Intelligence Agency and the administration, or it was not. If the latter was the case, the obligation of a true patriot, it seems to the writer, would be to inform the administration of his information. Certainly, his releases to the newspapers and his numerous speaking engagements were not, in my opinion, the proper means of informing the administration of the very serious situation.

The other alternative was that the information was known to the administration and the CIA, and for some reason it was deemed inadvisable at that particular time to make public the information.

Were this an ordinary citizen with such information and no access to the White House, it would appear that it might be proper for such a person to use the newspapers to call such a situation to the attention of the government. However, the senator is no ordinary citizen. Access to the White House would be available to him on extremely short notice.

A person acting for purely political motives would, of course, immediately go to the newspapers, but a senator acting for purely patriotic motives would avail himself of the opportunities available to make such vital information known to the proper governmental authorities. In doing what he did it is conceivable that the senator could have blundered the country into a disastrous situation or perhaps jeopardized the very security of the U.S.

Despite these risks, the senator took the purely political choice of resort to the information media. In this writer's opinion, such conduct should not be rewarded with another term in office.

—Robert A. Scher